

S E C R E T

1 August 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: SB/RR

SUBJECT : Self-immolations by Soviet Citizens

1. From a Western traveller, who returned on 18 July from a visit to the Soviet Union, it was learned that on 10 February 1969 Mykola BERESLAVSKY (d.o.b. 1924), a former member of the UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army), poured gasoline over his clothing, shouted "long live the Ukraine", and tried to set fire to himself on the Kreshchatyk (main street) in Kiev, but he was arrested by the militia. BERESLAVSKY was tried on 27 May 1969 in Kiev and sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison.

2. A prior attempt at self-immolation by a Soviet Ukrainian took place on 5 December 1968 (Constitution Day), again on the Kreshchatyk, when a 50-year old teacher from Denpropetrovsk, V.I. MAKUKH, set fire to himself and died the same night after being taken to a hospital in an ambulance. It was said that MAKUKH was so depressed by Russification in the Ukraine and by the persecution of Ukrainian intellectuals that he decided to sacrifice himself as a symbol of protest.

3. There was news about two other self-immolations by Soviet citizens in the past, but little is known about them. A fnu DIDYK, reportedly set fire to himself in 1966 in Moscow in front of the KGB building, and fnu KRISENKOV, died from a explosive in 1967 which he discharged as he carried it in front of the Lenin Mausoleum.

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